



CITY OF BETHLEHEM MEDICAL RESERVE CORPS NEWSLETTER

Unit Volunteers

NURSES	57
NURSE PRACTITIONERS	1
PUBLIC HEALTH/MEDICAL	9
PHYSICIANS	6
PHYSICIAN ASSISTANTS	1
PHARMACISTS	7
NON-PUBLIC HEALTH/NON-MEDICAL	11
MENTAL HEALTH PROFESSIONALS	7
EMS PROFESSIONALS	8
DENTISTS	2
VETERINARIANS	1

Transitions: MRC Coordinator Change

This Issue:

- Unit Volunteer Numbers
- Coordinator Message
- See us in Action!
- Recent and Upcoming Activities
- Health Topic: Summer Travel & Safety
- 2013 MRC Network Profile
- Volunteer Spotlight-Dee Darragh
- Unit Updates & Reminders

SAVE THE DATE!

The next Bethlehem MRC volunteer meeting will be held at 6:00PM on Wednesday, October 22nd, at Lehigh Valley Hospital-Muhlenberg

More details will be sent out via email prior to this event

We hope to see you there!

Dear Colleagues,

As many of you know, this is my last newsletter as Coordinator of the Bethlehem MRC. I will instead be focusing more on the Bethlehem Health Bureau's Public Health Emergency Preparedness (PHEP) program and its activities.

It has been my privilege and absolute pleasure to coordinate this unit these past four years. The dedication, skills, and compassion of our volunteers are truly inspiring and serve as a model to all. I'm so grateful for the opportunity to have worked with you and be a part of this unit's history.

Because the PHEP and MRC programs are so closely aligned, I know I can look forward to seeing you at future BMRC events and watching the progress of the Bethlehem MRC under the leadership of Claudia Richan.

Sincerely,

Fallon P. Maggio



Dear Volunteers and Community Partners,

I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce myself to you-I've been employed with the Bethlehem Health Bureau for 12 years working in the capacity as a community health specialist. In this role, I have worked mainly in the areas of chronic disease, focusing on nutrition, physical activity, smoking cessation and most recently fall prevention for seniors.

I'm very excited to take on this new role with the Bethlehem MRC and look forward to leading an outstanding unit of volunteers in various public health & emergency initiatives.

Sincerely,

Claudia Richan, Bethlehem MRC Coordinator





Kathy Halkins administers a flu vaccine at the Bethlehem Health Bureau's Drive Thru Flu Vaccine Clinic

Bethlehem MRC in Action!



Fallon Maggio with AVMRC & CERT Volunteers at the St. Luke's University Hospital Half Marathon



Naylin Rivera, Katrina Knight, and a BHB Intern promote preparedness at the NC Special Olympics

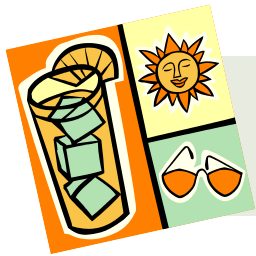
Recent Activities:

February 9th: Drive Through Flu Vaccine Clinic
March 19th: Bethlehem MRC Volunteer Meeting
April 17th-21st: SERVPA Call Down Drill
April 27th: St. Luke's University Hospital Half Marathon
May 1st: Northampton County Special Olympics
May 20th: MRC/CERT Training Rodeo at Mack South

***One orientation session was held in March**

Upcoming Events:

TBD American Heartsaver Training
August 1st: Pocono Raceway/LVHN Assets Tour
September 27th: Lowe's Safety Saturday (preparedness promotion)
October 22nd: Bethlehem MRC Volunteer Meeting
November 15th: Drive Through Flu Vaccine Clinic (rain date 11/16/14)



Health Topic: Summer Travel and Safety



By Dr. Basil Dolphin

The summer travel season is upon us and I would like to remind our volunteers and the public that travel, while broadening and exhilarating, can be hazardous. The most common cause of death in travelers is not some exotic disease or heart attack but traffic accidents (according to the WHO). So if you're traveling abroad, keep in mind when that in many countries traffic comes from the other direction.

Another risk to health is water which can pose problems in several ways: First the water may not be safe to drink. A good strategy is to drink bottled water but there can be problems with that plan. Not all bottled water is safe-water that is bottled locally maybe contaminated. Many places in the world bottle tap water and sell it; for better or worse it even happens in the USA. Drinking bottled water from a country that you feel safe drinking the tap water is a good rule of thumb. One extra point, beware of the refilled bottle of water. It is good practice to open the bottle yourself and feel that satisfying click rather than leave it to the waiter. Remember-it is cheaper to fill the bottle from the tap than to send to France for the real stuff.

Two other points on water: Don't let shower water get in your mouth and be sure to brush your teeth with your bottled or treated water if you are not sure of its cleanliness. To complete the whole water thing, be careful when swimming in fresh water in many tropical countries. Leptospirosis is often a concern for river rafters and it can be prevented by taking doxycycline. Another issue in tropical countries is schistosomiasis. What makes schistosomiasis so interesting is that it is able to bore through intact skin.

There are three types and each has its favorite target organ. It likes slow moving water, such as those found in lakes and ponds, but has been found to be a threat in the slow moving water of the near-shore water of streams. This parasite can cause a lifelong infection.

Another major concern is mosquitoes. The list of diseases they transmit is ever-growing. Apart from the old favorites such as yellow fever and malaria are diseases like dengue and chikungunya fevers. These diseases are spreading to parts of the world where they were not previously found. Currently, there are no medications to protect us from them, but as with all arthropod borne diseases, prevention is the key. Knowing when the insects are active is helpful. Malaria mosquitoes are most active at dusk and dawn while Dengue carriers do their dirty work during the day. Wearing long, loose fitting sleeves for shirts and pants is protective. 30% DEET is the optimal strength to keep arthropods at bay.

Remember: MERS, which I wrote about in the last newsletter, is a growing concern. Also, measles has been in the news for imported cases so make sure you are fully immunized against it. Polio is also making a comeback in areas of conflict. The rules countries have established for entry are in a state of flux, so if your plans involve travel to south Asia or the middle east please consult the CDC web site or embassy.

Last, but not least, foodborne diseases can be a major problem. Eating food that is cooked and served hot is important. Avoiding salads is very wise. Don't eat off of food carts, they have no refrigeration and usually no soap and water for hand washing and cleaning. Again, please make sure that your vaccinations are up to date for Hepatitis A and typhoid fever. Carbonated beverages are safe to drink, as the carbonation kill bacteria and viruses. If traveling to high altitude (8,000 feet and up) you might want to consider medication to help ease the transition. It only has to be taken the first few days after making the ascent.

When giving travel advice I feel as if I am throwing a wet blanket on what may be the trip of a lifetime. But planning ahead for travel should include planning for your welfare. In doing so, you will ensure a more productive and enjoyable trip. Bon Chance!

2013 MRC Network Profile

In 2013, the National Association of County & City Health Officials (NACCHO) conducted a survey of Medical Reserve Corps units across the country to assess their unit composition, administration, and community impact. Bethlehem MRC was one of 837 units that participated in this study, the outcome of which is a comprehensive report, including some terrific infographics.

Want to read the MRC Network Profile Report? Click on the following link:

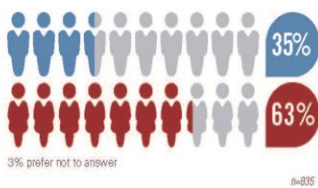
<http://www.naccho.org/publications/emergency/upload/TTC-NACCHO-MRC-Report-2013-lo-res.pdf>

INFOGRAPHIC

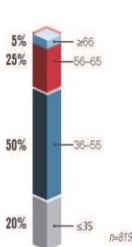
Medical Reserve Corps unit leader and volunteer profile

Unit leader profile

GENDER



AGE



TENURE

Leaders who were part of MRC prior to becoming leader

28%

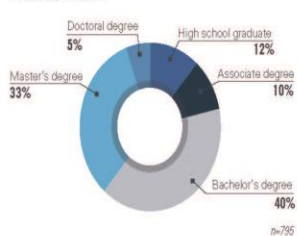
Average length of service in years

3.6

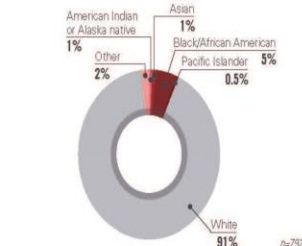
Units that have a succession plan in place for leader transitions or turnover

46%

EDUCATION

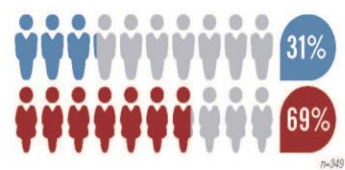


RACE

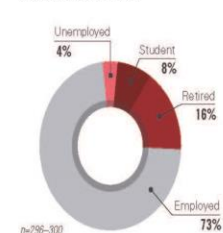


Unit volunteer profile

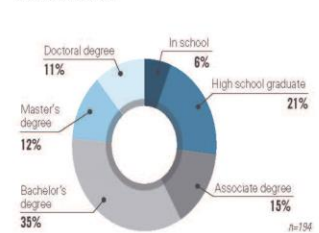
GENDER



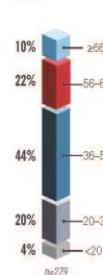
WORK STATUS



EDUCATION



AGE



EXPERIENCE



Deirdre Darragh, MSED, BSN, RN, NCSN

Years with Bethlehem MRC: 2006-present
Profession: Nursing 1982-present

Originally a “Jersey Girl”, I grew up in a family of “service professionals”, believing in the value of helping others and the positive impact of making a difference. Choosing a clinical nursing profession seemed a natural fit to pursue my love for the sciences, and at the same time, support others in their journey towards health and wellness. My 32-year nursing career has taken me from the walls of Georgetown’s campus where I earned my BSN degree, to New Jersey, New York and ultimately, to the Lehigh Valley, where I settled in Bethlehem with my husband, Tim. After spending “more than half” of my lifetime here, I’m a “Pennsy Girl” now!

Becoming a Medical Reserve Corps volunteer is a culmination of taking my passion beyond other walls -of hospitals, home care and K-12 school settings that have been my practice areas- to that larger community of Bethlehem I know as my “human family.” I feel blessed to work with many Lehigh Valley doctors, nurses, pharmacists, emergency response leaders and civilian volunteers who also dedicate their time and talents to promoting health and resiliency. There are several unique ways that BMRC accomplishes this: preparedness outreach and trainings, community vaccine clinics, health fairs and events, to name a few. My favorite 2013 highlight was riding along in the SAG (“support and gear”) vehicle with BMRC Coordinator Fallon Maggio last October, attending to needs of Runner’s World Half-Marathon participants as they ran their course through our city. Another was participating in a mock “Decontamination Drill” with Northampton County Director of Emergency Services, Robert Mateff, local firefighters, police, EMTs and several MRC volunteers: These experiences have brought me lifelong friends, made me a better nurse, and helped me to grow as an active member in my community.

Being a BMRC volunteer has also provided me the privilege of representing the Lehigh Valley’s preparedness efforts on a Federal level: By serving on US Dept. Of Homeland Security’s Community Health Resilience Initiatives Task Force and the US Resiliency System, I lend local perspectives to these agencies’ preparedness planning efforts, so that together, we may meet common goals of society-wide community resilience, especially in times of natural or man-made disasters.

Whether you are seeking personal satisfaction through service, or wish to grow your public health skills or just enjoy meeting the great people living here in the Lehigh Valley, consider joining the BMRC “family” - a team that **embraces** making a difference in our community’s health resilience.





UNIT UPDATES

**Looking to enhance your skills as an MRC
volunteer?
Check out these FREE online training sites!**

MRC TRAIN:

www.mrc.train.org

FEMA Independent Study:

<http://training.fema.gov/IS/crslist.aspx>

REMINDERS

Please remember to notify the Bethlehem MRC of any contact changes and update your SERVPA profile as needed, focusing on:

- Contact information (address, phone number, email)
- Professional licenses (including expiration dates)
- Driver's license (expiration date)
- Completed trainings



If you cannot remember your login information, please do not create a new profile. Contact Claudia Richan (crichan@bethlehem-pa.gov) to obtain your login name and/or reset your password.

For information about joining the City of Bethlehem Medical Reserve Corps, please contact the Bethlehem Health Bureau at 610-865-7083 or visit our website at www.bethlehemmrc.com